

THE TRADITION OF KENDURI AS A MEANS OF ISLAMIC EDUCATIONAL VALUES IN MALAY SOCIETY

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Abstract

The Malay Society is an ethnic group with a strong identity in language, and cultural values formed by a long history of social, religious, and civilizational interactions, especially in the Malay Peninsula. The kenduri tradition as one of the cultural practices in Malay society is not a ceremonial ritual but plays a strategic role in pedagogical or educational matters as a means of character formation that takes place not only through formal institutions, but also through traditions and social practices of the community that instill spiritual educational values and social ethics that become the identity of the characteristics of the Malay society. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method approach (Literature review) with literature analysis and historical-cultural data searches from articles or previous studies to identify the function of the kenduri tradition in education in the life of Malay society. The results of this study indicate that the kenduri tradition contains spiritual educational and social values that function as a means of non-formal education that cannot be replaced by education through modern formal based on institutions.

Keywords: Kenduri tradition; Values education; Malay society.

INTRODUCTION

Malay refers to those who speak Malay and practice Malay customs, the word Malay Probably comes from the name of a tributary called Sungai Melayu in the upper reaches of the Batang Hari River, Sumatra. Taht is where the Malay kingdom was located around 1500 years ago before or during Sriwijaya kingdom. Etymologically, the word "Malay" comes from the Sansekerta language "Melaya" which means hill or high ground. Malays are the native inhabitants of the Malayan region (the Malay Peninsula)(Dahlan, 2015). So Malay is the name of a race, tribe, place, language, even kingdom. And the Malay people are people who live on the Malay Peninsula who speak Malay language and have Malay traditions.

The identification and authentication of Indonesian culture has always been an interesting topic for further discussion, as for the Indonesian people, throughout its history, culture has been considered the foundation of the nation's social life. According to Taufik Abdullah, culture is the result of various dialogues from outside the country during its growth and development(Sanusi, 2017). As Malay history in the Indonesian archipelago has formed a significant part of world history, particularly in terms of culture and religion, it was once the center of Islamic culture and religion in Southeast Asia(Rahman, 2023). We can conclude that the Malay people are adherents of Islam, therefore the traditions and culture of the Malay people are also based on Islam.

Education is a process that extends beyond formal institutions like schools, but also involves families, communities, and the environment as the primary agents of non-formal education, providing role models and fostering habits. Education and culture are interrelated variables, and education is constantly evolving in line with cultural developments, as education is a process of cultural flow and a reflection of cultural values(Jermias, Umar, & Syukur, 2024). In the context of Indonesian society, especially Malay society, which is rich in tradition and culture, education

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cannot be separated from collective religious practices such as the kenduri tradition which is a means of internalizing religious values and is a means of forming the character of Malay society.

The kenduri tradition is one of the traditions of the Malay community. The kenduri tradition is known as a tradition of thanksgiving for blessings from God as a form of gratitude for the owner of the event or collective prayer to ward off disaster or grief. According to Ahmad Dahlan, a Batam historian, the kenduri tradition is one of the means and media to preserve the rich history and culture of the Malay people. At first glance, it may only seem like a communal meal, but in fact, many educational, historical, and cultural values of the Malay people can be preserved and passed down through the kenduri tradition (Mada, 2016).

Besides being a cultural and customary practice of the Malay people, the kenduri tradition also contains many educational values. This article will discuss the Islamic educational values within the kenduri tradition, which can serve as a means of indirect (non-formal) education, especially for the next generation of the Malay community. It is hoped that this article will ensure the kenduri tradition continues to be preserved and practiced, especially by the Malay community, amidst the onslaught of changes in the era of globalization and the influx of foreign cultures that influence today's younger generation. The kenduri tradition is a cultural identity and a reflection of Malay society that deserves and must be preserved, as it possesses non-formal educational values that cannot be replaced by formal institutions. As the Malay community's traditional motto states: "*biarlah mati anak dari pada mati adat, mati anak gempar sekampung mati adat gempar sebangsa*" (Rehayati, 2013).

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach (literature review) with a focus on analyzing educational values within the Malay tradition of kenduri (celebration ceremonies). It is not a direct field study. This approach was chosen because the object of study is cultural and requires interpretation of meaning through social and historical contexts. This research employs a qualitative method with a phenomenological approach. The phenomenological approach serves as a logical and structured framework for understanding, interpreting, and explaining an issue or phenomenon (Mufiroh, Pratama, Fauziyah, & Faisal, 2025).

The research data was obtained through a literature review involving books on Malay history, scientific journal articles, and relevant previous research. All data were collected through document analysis techniques, selecting valid literature relevant to the research topic. Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis, encompassing data reduction, concept categorization, and interpretation of educational values within the kenduri tradition. This method enabled researchers to systematically and academically identify and describe the educational values contained within the kenduri tradition.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Description Tradition and Culture

Tradition is understood as anything passed down from generation to generation by ancestors. In the anthropology dictionary, tradition is the same as custom, namely the habits of the native inhabitants of a place, which include interrelated norms, laws, and rules, which then become a fixed system or regulation and encompass all conceptions of the cultural system to regulate human actions or deeds in social life. Meanwhile, in the sociology dictionary, tradition is defined as a belief that is passed down from generation to generation and can be maintained (Islamah, 2017).

According to Koentjaraningrat, culture comes from the Sansekerta language *buddhayah*, which means mind or reason. Culture is related to the creations of human mind or reason. Based on this, Koentjaraningrat defines culture as the power of the mind in the form of creativity, will, and feeling, while culture is the result of that creativity, will, and feeling (Koentjaraningrat, 2004).

Culture has a purpose, one of which is to help categorize and classify experiences. Culture makes life easier by providing ready-made solutions to problems and establishing patterns of relationships with previous events.

Culture and tradition are two inseparable elements that work together in social life. Tradition is a part of culture that has been passed down from generation to generation and is believed in by society. Tradition is also linked to culture and religion. Within tradition, a religious system is transmitted (Mardiana, Wahyuni, & Elsera, 2022). We can conclude that tradition is one application of a culture that continues to exist within a community. For Malays, culture must be based on religion, not religion that follows culture (Muslim, 2017).

The tradition of kenduri is derived from the Arabic language *hadhara*, meaning presence. Attending the event involves accepting the invitation of the host to gather together to pray to God Almighty (Izzah, Ismail, & Bakri, 2022). Kenduri, according to the big Indonesian dictionary (KBBI), means a meal to commemorate an event. The tradition of kenduri, also known as *selamatan*, is a communal prayer gathering with family, neighbors, and colleagues, led by a respected religious or traditional figure. The purpose of this kenduri tradition is to pray together to ward off disaster and overcome grief, such as the death of a family member, as well as to ask for a smooth, safe, and blessed event, and to express gratitude for the blessings received (Susanti & Rumondor, 2022).

Kenduri is a series of ritual activities carried out by the community, which takes the form of communal prayer, where the kenduri has certain terms and conditions in its implementation (Ismail, 2015). Furthermore, Malay society strongly believes in the values of the kenduri tradition, which, if not carried out, will impact the family. Therefore, the kenduri tradition is considered a religious tradition that must be carried out (Putri & Yesi, 2024).

Religious traditions are customs passed down through generations, rooted in religion. Religious traditions contain elements related to divinity or the beliefs of the community toward its adherents. The meaning of a religious tradition is always based on the teachings of the religion. This is done by the community to encourage people to practice and adhere to agreed-upon values and social order, thus providing motivation and profound values for those who believe in and apply them. Every religious tradition contains sacred symbols through a series of rituals, reverence, and devotion (Susanto, Wijaya, Rosidah, & Setyowati, 2020).

The steps of kenduri traditions that are usually carried out by the Malay community before the kenduri event takes place, generally women or mothers around the event area work together to prepare the event dishes which we often know as cooking together. The Malay community usually performs the kenduri tradition after Maghrib or Isha prayers, and the essence of the kenduri is a joint prayer led by religious figures or local traditional figures who are respected by the community, which can be in the form of reading *tahlil*, *yasin*, *dhikr* and prayers for salvation which are adjusted to the wishes of the owner of the event, and the tradition of the festival is usually closed by eating together with a banquet that has been prepared by the owner of the event.

Islamic Education Values in the Kenduri Tradition

Spiritual education is education related to the development of attitudes, mentality, inner self, feelings, and spirituality toward a matter, with the aim of achieving inner purity and spiritual intelligence in relation to drawing closer to God Almighty. The word "spiritual" is always associated with the heart, soul, and mind. These three are interconnected, as the goal of spiritual education is to purify the heart, cleanse the soul, and heal the mind from spiritual disturbances (diseases of the heart). So, with the existence of spiritual education in this kenduri tradition, it can eliminate and cleanse the heart disease that often occurs in a person when carrying out education in everyday life (Faozi, 2023). As for spiritual value education in the kenduri tradition as follows:

Value of Worship

The tradition of kenduri (feast) for the Malay community is not just a traditional ritual; it is also indirectly a means of worship. The value of worship in the kenduri tradition can be seen in the

content of the rituals performed during the main kenduri. For example, reading *tahlil* (recitation of the holly Quran), which includes recitations of *zikr* (remembrance of God) and praise of Allah Swt, followed by reading Surah Yasin (the Yasin verse), which indirectly teaches how to read the Quran. Finally, prayers are concluded.

Malay society is a society that is deeply rooted in Islamic teachings, therefore many of the Malay people, especially their elders, although they do not have proper formal education, are very intelligent and understand religious matters, one of which is in terms of reciting the holly Quran and reading the holly Quran, even many of the Malay elders that we meet memorize the verses of the holly Quran, especially the verses that are routinely read during the kenduri tradition. Through the kenduri tradition, the concept is embedded in the Malay people, that reciting the Koran and being able to read the holly is an obligation that must be done, if the Malay people cannot recite the holly Quran and read the holly Quran then this kenduri tradition will be extinct (Torik, Abdillah, & Febriani, 2022).

Aqidah Value

Aqidah in Arabic or etymologically comes from the word 'aqada, which means bond or in this case it means something established or believed by the heart and feelings (nurani), namely something that is believed and believed to be true by humans. Meanwhile, aqidah terminologically is something that is firmly held and firmly embedded in the depths of the soul. So if a person has aqidah in his heart, indirectly he has a bond that is believed in in his heart. In other words, aqidah is faith. Aqidah in everyday life can be implemented in individuals and social communities. Personally, a person feels the presence of Allah who is All-Knowing of all his actions so that he acts according to what is commanded. Belief or faith is the solution to all problems. Whoever wants to achieve happiness in this world and in the hereafter should start by strengthening his faith (Mukarromah, 2024). As Allah Swt says in Surah Al-Kahf: 107-108:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ كَانَتْ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتُ الْفِرْدَوْسِ نُزُلًا ﴿١٠٧﴾ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا لَا يَبْغُؤْنَ عَنْهَا حَوْلًا ﴿١٠٨﴾

Meaning: Indeed, those who believe and do righteous deeds will obtain Paradise as a place to live. They stay in it, they don't want to move from there.

The value of aqidah in the kenduri tradition is the value of faith and trust in Allah Swt (Kartika, 2023). Through the tradition of kenduri, Malay people learn that all blessings and sorrows are the will and destiny of Allah Swt. Kenduri teaches us to accept all sorrows and disasters that befall us, and to be grateful for all the blessings we receive. It is perfectly acceptable to hold kenduri for communal prayer, asking for the relief of sorrows and disasters. Kenduri can also be a way to express our gratitude for all the blessings that Allah Swt has given us. We invite and entertain the local community as a way of sharing happiness while always remembering to pray together. Indirectly, the tradition of kenduri instills the values of faith and faith in Allah Swt among Malay people.

Social and Cultural Values Education

Social values are the values that underlie, guide, and serve as the goals of human actions and forms of social life in carrying out, maintaining, and developing their social life. Social values are the norms that regulate relationships between people in group life. Therefore, social norms are the rules of relationships between people. Social activity is a manifestation of culture as a patterned action of humans in that society. This form is often referred to as a social system (Akbar, 2024).

A cultural value system (or cultural system) is a set of abstract concepts that live in the minds of most members of a society. Therefore, a cultural value system is considered important and valuable. It is part of a culture that provides direction and encouragement for human behavior. A cultural value system is an abstract concept because it is not explicitly formulated and is usually only felt, not explicitly formulated, by the members of the society concerned. This is also why the

concept is so difficult to change, let alone replace with a new concept (Hisyam, 2020). The following are the social and cultural values contained in the kenduri tradition:

Mutual Cooperation Values

In social life, there are social values that are generally adhered to by the community. These social values then regulate them in their relationships or social interactions, as is the case with the kenduri tradition. In this kenduri tradition, we are taught to respect each other and help each other. The value of mutual cooperation in this kenduri tradition can be seen in the way it is carried out, namely the host who will hold the kenduri tradition asks for help from family and neighbors to help in preparing several dishes for the kenduri event that will be held. This value of mutual cooperation shows that the kenduri tradition is a custom that is still considered important by the Malay community to increase mutual respect (Kartika, 2023). As Allah Swt says:

وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴿٢٠﴾

Meaning: and help you in (doing) righteousness and piety, and do not help you in committing sins and enmity. Fear Allah, indeed Allah is very severe in punishment.

In addition to mutual cooperation in the matter of the banquet held by women, the Malay community (especially the men) also work together in preparing the venue for the kenduri event, they help happily and do not expect any reward, in fact they feel guilty if they do not contribute in helping to prepare this kenduri tradition, because the value of mutual cooperation in this kenduri tradition is inherent and embedded in the Malay community.

Values of Friendship

One of the Islamic educational values in the tradition of kenduri is the value of silaturahmi, which is a good behavior. Islam also teaches us to avoid arrogance among relatives and to maintain good relations with others. Silaturahmi also brings blessings and broadens one's fortune. This prosperity does not have to be in the form of wealth and material things, but can also take the form of friendship and comfort. As stated in the Qur'an, Surah An-Nisa, verse 1:

وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا ﴿١﴾

Meaning: and fear Allah in whose name you ask each other and (maintain) family relationships. Indeed, Allah always guards and watches over you.

Silaturahmi not only brings good fortune but also brings peace to those who do it. Some even say that *silaturahmi* can also prolong life, because it eliminates envy and jealousy of one's relatives, because it is impossible for someone to interact and socialize together if there are problems between them. Through the tradition of kenduri, neighbors and relatives who rarely see each other due to their respective busy lives can meet and chat together at this kenduri event. Even with *silaturahmi* in the kenduri tradition, it can be a forum for exchanging ideas to relieve fatigue after work. Because humans are social creatures, humans will need other humans to collaborate with each other in fulfilling the needs of one another's social functions (Titarani, Setyaningsih, & Kamila, 2024).

As Malays, especially the next generation, we should continue to preserve this tradition of kenduri, as it offers numerous educational values and benefits. Of course, the education gained through this tradition cannot be replaced by any formal education, no matter how high the level. The tradition of kenduri is a symbol of the Malay people's customs and culture. The loss of this tradition means the loss of the Malay community's identity, as reflected in the Malay proverb that is the oath of Hang Tuah. "*Takkan Melayu hilang di bumi, bumi bertuah negeri beradat*" (Aulia, Arrahmah, & Kayza, 2024).

CONCLUSION

The tradition of kenduri in Malay society is not merely a customary practice or ceremonial ritual, but rather a means of educational values that has a strategic pedagogical function in the social and religious life of the community. Through a series of kenduri activities, from preparation to the implementation of communal prayers, spiritual educational values such as worship and strengthening of faith (*aqidah*), as well as socio-cultural values such as mutual cooperation, *silaturahmi* (*silaturahmi*), togetherness, and social solidarity are internalized. These values are passed down through generations through collective practices inherent in the daily lives of Malay people. The results of this study confirm that the kenduri tradition serves as an effective and contextual non-formal educational tool, one that cannot be completely replaced by formal education based on modern institutions. Kenduri serves as a space for character formation, strengthening cultural identity, and instilling Islamic values that are deeply rooted in Malay social life. Therefore, preserving the kenduri tradition is crucial not only as an effort to preserve cultural heritage but also as a strategy to maintain an authentic and relevant values education system amidst the challenges of globalization and socio-cultural change. Further research is suggested to examine the kenduri tradition through field research with an empirical approach in order to obtain a deeper understanding of the practices, meanings, and transformations of spiritual and social educational values in the life of Malay society, especially amidst the influence of modernization and generational change, so that the kenduri tradition can be positioned more fully as a model of value education based on relevant and sustainable local wisdom.

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